

Strategies for Business Writers Instructor's Manual

This manual includes answers to tasks and exercises, four techniques for overcoming writer's block, a review of the principles of editing and proof-reading, and guidelines for writing biodata statements.

Answer Key

CHAPTER 2: THE POWER WRITING PROCESS (pages 14–26)

Business Letter Writing: Reading and Discussion (page 16)

The ATTC business letter is clear and complete. It contains the main idea and major points.

The strengths of this letter are that it is an accurate and concise statement of the content. It has an objective, professional tone.

Analysis of Structure: Business Letter (page 19)

AATC
American ASEAN Trade Council, Inc.
40 East 49th Street, New York, NY 10017
Tel: (212) 688-2755 Fax: (212) 688-2756
www.AATC.org
September 25, 2006

Dear Business Colleague Interested in Indonesia:

The new and completely changed tax laws of Indonesia will affect all areas of business in that country. Being aware of your firm's interest in Indonesia, we felt that you or your associates would be pleased to learn that a special in-depth, all-day tax analysis seminar has been arranged for mid-October by the well known SGV-Utomo Management Consultants, GP & Company, tax consultants of Jakarta, and the American ASEAN Trade Council.

Three Indonesian tax seminars designed by the SGV-Utomo Group are a result of an extended period devoted to critically following and analyzing the development of the new tax laws. Dr. Utomo and another Indonesian tax expert, Dr. Prijohando, plus the Indonesian Government's Director of Direct Taxes, Dr. Mansury, will be addressing the seminar. In addition, a member of the Harvard Group that has spent much time in Indonesia helping to develop the new tax system will be a seminar panel member.

Dr. Utomo has requested that each seminar be limited to 30 participants so that personal attention can be paid to specific questions. Furthermore, the day after each seminar will include one-on-one meetings with a panel member from Indonesia.

The seminars will be held in San Francisco on October 11, in Dallas on October 14, and in New York on October 18. To help ensure a valuable meeting, all registrants will receive, in advance, a copy of the new laws in English with additional information, explanations of the laws, and the official decrees.

Full knowledge of these new laws will make your business operations in or with Indonesia more productive and profitable. It would be very helpful if your firm's attendance could be confirmed in advance by e-mailing me at esamuels@AATC.com.

Sincerely,

Eric Samuels, Chairman

Enclosure: Brochure covering dates, location, costs, and reservation information

- Sentence connectors (transition words)

In addition, Furthermore

- Format (visual design)

The visual design is effective and increases readability. The format follows the accepted principles for a business letter: 12-point Times Roman font, single spacing, 1-inch margins, and indentation of the first word of every paragraph.

Evaluation of Word Choice: Business Letter (page 21)

- sentence connectors (transition words)
In addition, Furthermore
- pronouns
your, we, you, your, your, your, me
- verbs
affect, felt, would be, to learn, has been arranged, designed, devoted, critically, will be addressing, has spent, to develop, has requested, can be paid, will include, will be held, ensure, will receive, will make, would be, could be confirmed
- adjectives and adverbs
new, completely changed, all, pleased, special, in-depth, all-day, well-known, extended, critically, new, much, personal, specific, each, one-on-one, valuable, additional, official, full, new, productive, profitable, very, helpful
- contractions (none)
The style of this writer is impersonal (no use of first-person pronouns), formal (no contractions, idioms, or slang), and non-technical.

Assignment: Memorandum (page 22)

A model for this memo is on page 71 in Chapter 5 (The Concise Memorandum).

CHAPTER 3: EFFECTIVE BUSINESS STYLE (pages 27–42)

Task: Sentence Combining (page 30)

Revision (Different versions are possible.)

Because my supervisor Diego and I have differing approaches to work and clashing personalities, we are incompatible. Although Diego was born and raised in Mexico, he speaks English fluently, but we can't communicate with each other. While Diego is reserved and quiet, I'm an extrovert who likes to express my opinions and hear others' viewpoints. Perhaps this is because I used to work in a small consulting company, so I believe in sharing information with my colleagues, whereas Diego has always worked in large corporations and is less open than I am. Also, we have opposite body rhythms, so he

arrives at the office late and stays until 8 PM, but I get to work early in the morning and do my best work before 3 PM. Moreover, our skills and abilities are different; my area of expertise is financial analysis, and I am experienced in creating spreadsheets. However, Diego is good at conceptual thinking and long term planning.

Finally, I stay current with upgrades in our software because technology is an essential tool in my job, while Diego tends to complain about any changes in software, which is another good example of our lack of compatibility. These problems involve basic differences in work styles and styles of communication, to some degree. Counseling is one solution to this serious problem although it may only make the situation worse if we say things to each other that we will regret. Of course, one of us could move to a different department here, or I could move to the accounting department in the company headquarters in New Jersey. Certainly, once we attempt to resolve our problems, we will be much more productive since we will be able to concentrate on our assignments and enjoy our professional lives.

Paragraph Coherence: “The Management Myth” (page 32)

Next to analysis, communications skills must count among the most important for future masters of the universe. To their credit, business schools do stress these skills and force their students to engage in make-believe presentations to one another. On the whole, however, management education has been less than a boon for those who value free and meaningful speech. M.B.A.s have taken obfuscatory jargon . . . to a level that would have made even the Scholastics blanch. As students of philosophy know, Descartes dismantled the edifice of medieval thought by writing clearly and showing that knowledge, by nature, is intelligible, not obscure.

Beyond building skills, business training must be about values. As I write this, I know that my M.B.A. friends are squirming in their seats. They’ve all been forced to sit through an “ethics” course, in which they learned to toss around the more fancy phrases like “the categorical imperative” and discuss borderline criminal behavior such as what’s a legitimate hotel bill and what’s just plain stealing from the expense account, how to tell the difference between a pat on the shoulder and sexual harassment, and so on. But, as anyone who has studied Aristotle will know, “values” aren’t something you bump into from time to time during the course of a business career. All of business is about values all of the time.

Tone: “The Mangement Myth” (page 33)

The tone is subjective. It is both serious and humorous, satirical, persuasive, and authoritative. Stewart writes in an unusually colorful style that is appropriate for magazine articles but not business documents.

Word Choice: Objectivity (page 34)

Revision

1. Because of the decreased inflation rate, Italy’s economy may eventually stabilize.
2. Consumers should not buy products made by companies that use child labor.
3. The conclusion is justified by the data in the report.
4. The results of the survey are based on only 25 interviews.
5. Discussions with the executives revealed the problems in accounting procedures.
6. The journalist analyzed the president’s foreign policy in his *New York Times* article.
7. A modern approach is necessary to rebuild the company and dismiss unproductive employees.
8. The increase in outsourcing has not caused the high unemployment rate in the United States.

Analysis of Negative Tone (page 35)

In the Department of the Army letter from William Ralston, the tone is negative and bureaucratic. After reading the letter, discuss these questions as a class.

- What is the purpose of this letter?
The purpose is to turn down an FOI request.
- What is the main idea?
The writer is refusing the request for an IFP.
- What pronouns are used in this excerpt?
Pronouns used are *your* and *you*.
- What adjectives and adverbs are used?
Adjectives and adverbs include *further*, *telephonic*, *third*, *personal*, *official*, *written*, *denial*, *approximately*, *home*.
- Is the tone of this letter consistent throughout?
Yes, the tone is consistently negative.

- Is the tone subjective or objective?
The tone is objective.

Analysis of Style: *Blink* (page 37)

I think we are innately suspicious of this kind of rapid cognition. We live in a world that assumes that the quality of a decision is directly related to the time and effort that went into making it. When doctors are faced with a difficult diagnosis, they order more tests, and when we are uncertain about what we hear, we ask for a second opinion. And what do we tell our children? Haste makes waste. Look before you leap. Stop and *think*. Don't judge a book by its cover. We believe that we are always better off gathering as much information as possible and spending as much time as possible in deliberation. We really only trust conscious decision making. But there are moments, particularly in times of stress, when haste does not make waste, when our snap judgments and first impressions can offer a much better means of making sense of the world. The first task of *Blink* is to convince you of a simple fact: decisions made very quickly can be every bit as good as decisions made cautiously and deliberately. . . .

In *Blink* you'll meet doctors and generals and coaches and furniture designers and musicians and actors and car salesmen and countless others, all of whom are very good at what they do and all of whom owe their success, at least in part, to the steps they have taken to shape and manage and educate their unconscious reactions. The power of knowing, in that first two seconds, is not a gift given magically to a fortunate few. It is an ability that we can all cultivate for ourselves. . . .

There are lots of books that tackle broad themes, that analyze the world from great remove. This is not one of them. *Blink* is concerned with the very smallest components of our everyday lives—the content and origin of those instantaneous impressions and conclusions that spontaneously arise whenever we meet a new person or confront a complex situation or have to make a decision under conditions of stress. When it comes to the task of understanding ourselves and our world, I think we pay too much attention to those grand themes and too little to the particulars of those fleeting moments. But what if we stopped scanning the horizon with our binoculars and began instead examining our own decision making and behavior through the most powerful of microscopes? I think that would change the way wars are fought, the kinds of movies that get made, the way police officers are trained, the way couples are counseled, the way job interviews are conducted, and on and on. And if we were to combine all of those little changes, we would end up with

a different and better world. I believe—and I hope that by the end of this book you will believe it as well—that the task of making sense of ourselves and our behavior requires that we acknowledge there can be as much value in the blink of an eye as in months of rational analysis. (502 words)

Gladwell writes in a conversational style that is informal and personal. He reveals his personal feelings in the statements that are underlined in the excerpt above.

Gladwell's tone is subjective, authoritative, and persuasive.

Sentence connectors

But, but, and

Interesting adjectives and adverbs

Adjectives: suspicious, rapid, difficult, more, uncertain, second, better off, conscious, snap, first, better, first, simple, good, unconscious, first, fortunate, broad, great, smallest, everyday, instantaneous, new, complex, grand, fleeting, own, powerful, little, different, better, rational

Adverbs: innately, directly, always, really, particularly, much, very quickly, cautiously, deliberately, very, magically, very, spontaneously, too, most, as much

Strong, active verbs

Verbs: think, live, assumes, order, ask, tell, makes, look, leap, stop, think, judge, believe, trust, can offer, to convince, made, meet, owe, have taken, to shape, manage, educate, can cultivate, tackle, analyze, arise, meet, confront, have to make, comes, pay, stopped, think, change, to combine, end up, believe, hope, believe, requires, acknowledge,

Variety of sentence structure

The excerpt contains simple, complex, and compound sentences. The complex sentences have adjective, adverbial, and noun clauses.

Parallelism

When doctors are faced with a difficult diagnosis, they order more tests, and when we are uncertain about what we hear, we ask for a second opinion. gathering as much information as possible and spending as much time as possible in deliberation.

all of whom are very good at what they do and all of whom owe their success, at least in part, to the steps they have taken to shape and manage and educate their unconscious reactions.

whenever we meet a new person or confront a complex situation or have to make a decision under conditions of stress.

I think that would change the way wars are fought, the kinds of movies that get made, the way police officers are trained, the way couples are counseled, the way job interviews are conducted, and on and on.

CHAPTER 4: THE READABLE RESUME AND COVER LETTER (pages 43–63)

Organization Task (page 49)

EDUCATION

University of California—Berkeley

- MBA: Haas School of Business *September 2002–May 2004*
(with honors)
- B.A. in Business and Economics: *September 1996–May 2000*
GPA 3.9 (4.0 scale)
- Cum Laude

Georgetown University—Washington, DC

- Certificate in Business and Professional English *September 2000–May 2001*
- Member of GU International Club

Microsoft Training Center—Arlington, VA

- Certificate in Microsoft Word Training *June–August 2001*

Task: Parallelism (page 51)

Experience

LaReche, Inc.

Casablanca, Morocco

Senior Office Administrator

Maintained financial records for \$1.5 million project

Supervised large office staff

Tracked mileage and repairs of fleet of four-wheel drive vehicles

Planned procurement and banking trips to Rabat
 Designed and developed process for reviewing expenditures and deposits
 Measured and analyzed monthly productivity rates

Evaluation, Proofreading, and Editing (page 59)

2700 Fleetwood Road
 Apartment 330
 McLean, VA 22101
 November 12, 2006

Mr. Alexander Booth, Director
 Human Resources Department
 Globaltech, Inc.
 2207 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20007

Dear Mr. Booth:

I just read the advertisement (*Washington Post*, 11-10-06) for an administrative **assistant** at Globaltech, Inc, and I **believe** that I am qualified for this position. Currently, I am **studying** for an MBA at the University of Maryland. I am a part-time graduate student, so I want to get a job in international business while I am finishing my degree.

In June 2000, I graduated with honors from Michigan State University with a major in Business Management and a minor in Finance. Before that I was employed in Casablanca, Morocco, as office administrator. During this overseas opportunity, I maintained financial records for a rural project while supervising the large office staff. My administrative **responsibilities** included tracking the mileage and repairs of a fleet of four-wheel-drive vehicles and planning procurement and banking trips to Rabat, Morocco.

I am **skilled** in office organization, scheduling, ordering supplies, and handling telephone, e-mail, and fax communications. I have **above-average** English skills; **moreover**, I am fluent in French and Arabic. My computer skills are excellent.

My resume is enclosed, and I can provide you with references from my previous positions. I hope to have the **opportunity** to meet with you to discuss what **I can contribute to your company.** Feel free to telephone me at 703-555-1234, send a fax to 703-555-4321, or e-mail me at *angela@erols.com*. **I look forward to hearing from you.**

Sincerely,

Angela Callahan

Enclosure: resume

CHAPTER 5: THE CONCISE MEMORANDUM (pages 64–74)

Task: Organization: Informative Memo (page 66)

TO: All Branch Chiefs
FROM: William Betts, Division Head
SUBJECT: Agency Smoking Guidelines
DATE: March 20, 2006

The Agency smoking guidelines were expanded in February 2005 and were communicated to all branch chiefs and employees. There have been reports that these guidelines are not being followed by some of our branch chiefs.

You are expected to take the lead in this important area. I ask that you take whatever steps are required to ensure that the new procedures are being followed. Thank you for your support.

Task: Organization: Good News Memo (page 67)

TO: Sara Reeves, Manager, North Central Marketing Division
FROM: Wallace Wright, Branch Manager, North Central Marketing Division
SUBJECT: Promotion to Marketing Manager
DATE: October 4, 2006

You have been selected to fill the position of Marketing Manager in the Southwest Marketing Division. You have been a dedicated ACB employee for the past eight years, your qualifications are excellent, and you are a dependable and energetic worker.

The position, which has been vacant since August 1, 2006, is open because the Marketing Manager left the company. Although you will have to relocate to Boca Raton, Florida, the position includes a 10 percent salary increase. The new job begins on December 1, 2006.

I believe that you are the best person for this position. Congratulations on your new position.

Task: Organization: Bad News Memo (page 68)

TO: All North Central Marketing Division Employees
 FROM: Walter Wrong, President, North Central Marketing Division
 SUBJECT: Abolishing the Individualized Work Schedule (IWS)
 DATE: October 22, 2006

The Individualized Work Schedule (IWS) was implemented in September 2003, and the rules about this flex-time program were distributed and explained to all employees. Management is abolishing this flex-time program as of December 31, 2006, for a number of reasons.

The IWS is no longer a beneficial program to the Corporation because our customers need to be served at certain hours. Thus, we can't keep this program and still meet the needs of the business. Moreover, many employees abused or misused their flex-time, and some employees criticized the regulations of the IWS during quality circles. Finally, there has been a decrease in the productivity of our division since flex-time was implemented.

In September, the President and Vice-Presidents met to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the IWS. The Division President and Vice-Presidents reached this decision after a thorough analysis of all factors involved. I hope you will understand the necessity for this decision.

Evaluation (page 69)

- Put a box around the main idea.
- Underline the major points.
- Circle the supporting details.
- Underline the conclusion.
- Circle the pronouns.
- Highlight the adjectives and adverbs.

Now circle the words that best describe the tone of each memo.

Randolph Gray Corporation

subjective	informative	positive	argumentative
objective	emotional	negative	balanced

CDC Information Systems

subjective

informative

positive

authoritative

objective

emotional

negative

tentative

Assignment: Proofreading a Memorandum (page 73)

TO: All Division Employees
FROM: Chief, Administrative and Services Division
SUBJECT: Reducing Copier Costs
DATE: January 7, 2006

The purpose of this memo is to remind everyone in our division to reduce **his or her** copier use, **which** will reduce copier costs. The price of copier paper has **risen (was raised)** this year, making the cost for each copy higher. Remember that each of the copiers **has** reduction capabilities, and the **two** IBM machines offer **double-sided** copying. **Double-sided** copies take up less space in **your** files. **Please** use **these** features **whenever** possible.

We have a new Canon NP 500 copier **that has** replaced the Canon NP-400 on the second floor. The new Canon **copies** faster while maintaining the reduction and enlargement features. Please use this copier when convenient, and give us comments on **its** features and copy quality.

We appreciate your compliance with this request and know that your cooperation will have a positive **effect** on the financial health of our company.

CHAPTER 6: THE LOGICAL BUSINESS LETTER (pages 75–88)

Task: Format (page 76)

State of New Jersey
Department of Economic Development
Joseph D. Odell, Executive Director
210-555-5555 (phone)
210-555-1111 (fax)
www.newjersey.ed.gov

November 29, 2006

Juan Santos Agoria
Commercial Officer
Embassy of Honduras
4301 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Mr. Agoria:

The Marketing Division of the Department of Economic Development is a state-supported agency that assists New Jersey companies in the expansion of international and domestic markets through direct marketing counseling. This Division offers technical assistance through market research, in-house counseling, trade lead dissemination, trade missions, and export development seminars and workshops.

Our Division is currently updating our international business library and is seeking any publications that can be made available through your office to assist us when counseling client companies. This would include an online directory of Honduran manufacturers and any other available publications on exporting and importing.

In addition, we would like to request that our Division's name and e-mail address be added to your listserv in order that we may be current on all international and domestic trade opportunities in Honduras. Our e-mail address is ded@newjersey.ed.gov.

If there is any cost associated with the above requests, please contact me. Thank you for your assistance. I am enclosing our marketing brochure.

Sincerely,

Mary Alice Reardon
Director

Enclosure: Marketing Brochure

Organization and Writing (page 79)

- Letter from a company that sells multi-media products informing the job applicant that he or she has not been selected for a marketing position. (Inductive)
- Letter from a college informing the applicant that he or she has not been admitted to the college but has been placed on the waiting list. (Inductive)
- Letter from a university informing a student that he or she has been chosen for membership in Phi Beta Kappa (the national honor society) at the university. (Deductive)
- Letter from an insurance company announcing a change in the health insurance policy for employees who change jobs because of a disability and move to a lower pay rate. (Deductive-Restatement)
- Letter from a supervisor reprimanding a worker for missing many days of work in the past six months without submitting a doctor's statement. (Deductive-Restatement)

Task: Revision (page 81)

Dear Ms. Wallace:

I am requesting that you send me the application for admission to Trinity College and the catalogue that contains the course offerings for the fall semester of 2006 and the spring semester of 2007. I would also be happy to come to your office to pick them up.

I am hoping to attend Trinity College this fall and need to look over the courses that I could take as a freshman. If there are general education requirements for graduation, I would appreciate being given a list of these course requirements. Also, please include information about financial aid, scholarships, and employment opportunities for students. I will need financial aid or a part-time job of some kind. I would really like to work in the library because I love books.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. My e-mail address is es55@wahoo.com.

Sincerely,

Emily Song

Dear Dr. Schultz:

I am an undergraduate student at Duke University. I would like to interview you if you have some free time in the next few days for a paper I am writing in my American history course.

I must write a paper using several sources, including interviewing a professor at Duke University. Since you are an expert in American history of the 20th century, I would like to meet with you. My paper is on England's strategy in World War I. I would really appreciate it if you can spare the time to meet with me.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. My e-mail address is jr44@wahoo.com.

Sincerely,

Jordan Romero

Business Letter: Deductive Organization (page 82)

subjective	informative	positive	argumentative
objective	emotional	negative	balanced

Main Idea: I am writing to praise actions taken by Officer William Ford, a member of the Alexandria Police Department.

Business Letter: Inductive Organization (page 84)

subjective	informative	positive	argumentative
objective	emotional	negative	balanced

Main Idea: The National Institutes of Health does not award grants, including the Clinical Investigator Award, which you asked about specifically.

Assignment: Proofreading and Editing a Business Letter (page 86)

Revision

(Changes are in bold.)

4765 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016
ek8@gwu.edu
November 11, 2006

Ms. Shelly L. Harmon
Director, Human Resources
Deloitte & Touche LLP
10 Westport Road
Wilton, CT 96897

Dear Ms. Harmon:

Thank you for meeting with me **October 27, 2006**, at George Washington University during the International Student Job Fair and taking **your** valuable time to discuss the **opportunities** available **to** me. I found our discussion during **the** interview to be interesting, and I am excited about the possibility **of joining** the Washington office of Deloitte & Touche LLP in the summer of 2007 for a co-op or internship.

After the job fair, I **had a** chance to talk to **several professors** in the **university** about your company and **read the company brochure**. The company's **vision and goals appeal** to me. **Because of my background**, I can offer skills and insights that **may be helpful to the international** activity of the firm, especially in Eastern Europe. **On the other hand**, I can learn more about American business from **Deloitte & Touche LLP**.

I am confident that I can make a contribution to the **firm**. **I am excited by the** various possibilities your organization **offers**, and I **look** forward to **hearing** from you soon.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ekatarina Kurkova

CHAPTER 7: THE SHORT REPORT (pages 89–110)

Task: Paraphrasing *Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking* (page 95)

Because our instinctive and unconscious reactions to a person are based on our previous experiences and our environment, we have to change our social interactions in order to change these immediate reactions. If we have experiences that allow us to interact positively with a minority, our first impressions of that minority will change. For example, becoming very familiar with black society and the black culture may enable whites to develop positive associations that will end their inherent attitudes of discrimination. But first we have to actively take charge of these powerful intuitive impressions by changing how we live our lives. (100 words)

Example of a Report Abstract: “The Hidden Brain Drain” (page 97)

The abstract is informative. The thesis is in bold print. The major points are underlined.

“The Hidden Brain Drain: Off-Ramps and On-Ramps in Women’s Careers”

Harvard Business Review Report

February 25, 2005

Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Carolyn Buck Luce, Peggy Shiller, Sandra Southwell

Corporations have done a dismal job of retaining female talent. Indeed, they make it very easy for women to depart. When women take a temporary leave of absence to have children or deal with other personal matters, they find it difficult to return to work and contribute as they had previously. In essence, corporations provide women with many career off-ramps, but provide them with few on-ramps. This problem bodes badly for CEOs and top managers who view human resources as a critical asset. This research report, based on an extensive study by the Center for Work-Life Policy, a nonprofit research firm in New York City, provides the first comprehensive view of the forces behind the ongoing exodus of talented women from the workforce. The study identifies the reasons why women lose much of their earning power when they “off-ramp” and outlines the limited possibilities for finding on-ramps, or reentry points, for those wishing to re-enter. With in-depth

case studies and dozens of charts and tables accompanied by insightful interpretations of the data, the report constitutes one of the most detailed looks at the hidden brain drain that will prevent companies from effectively competing in the incipient war for talent. (199 words)

Proofreading and Editing: Sudan Report Abstract (page 98)

Abstract Revision (210 words)

Sudan

Since independence in 1956, Sudan has been ruled by coalition and military regimes, but neither type was able to end the disastrous civil war and local rebellions. In 1989 the National Islamic Front (NIF) gained control of the government. Currently, millions of refugees are starving in Darfur because of the brutality of this government. To put down a military uprising, the NIF destroyed the people's means of agricultural production, a form of genocide.

Political turmoil has long characterized the country, preventing economic and social development. Following independence, Sudan embarked on development plans to broaden the economic structure and expand exports. Due to political instability, economic mismanagement, environmental problems, and civil war, these plans failed to achieve their goals.

Today, Sudan exemplifies problems suffered by developing nations: government unrest, environmental damage, poverty, disease, and famine. The country faces a severe economic crisis because of a huge external debt and growing deficit. The worsening financial situation paved the way for multilateral institutions—the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—to impose their paradigms of development. However, the Bank and the IMF did not learn from past experience and continued to dictate the same structural adjustment programs and growth models that drove the peasants off the land and led to rebellion.

CHAPTER 8: CLEAR E-MAIL COMMUNICATION (pages 111–27)

Task: Subject Line (page 113)

Subject: Florida Marketing Meeting

Subject: Meeting at 2:30 Today on Productivity

Formal and Informal Business Style: Word Choice (page 116)

The Power Writing Process (Formal Style)

To improve writing skills, writers should *consider* writing as an analytical process with five distinct *components*: preparing, outlining, writing, editing, and rewriting. In the preparation stage, writers can clarify their purpose, audience, and goal. They should also *determine* whether they have *sufficient* knowledge about their topic or will have to do research to *identify* sources and gather information.

With an outline, writers can *prioritize* their information by constructing a thesis; major and minor points; and supporting data, such as facts, statistics, examples, and quotations. Following an outline *facilitates* the actual writing because the outline functions as a roadmap that efficiently guides writers to their logical destination.

In the writing stage, writers *transform* their outlined thoughts into pages of paragraphs after they decide which style and tone would be appropriate for their purpose and audience. This is the most *difficult* part of the process for many writers, whose *initial* draft may not be clear, concise, or coherent. Having completed the first draft, authors must *utilize* their editing ability to *review* and enhance the content, style, and organization of their documents. Skillful editing can involve a *substantial* amount of time. It *requires* concentration on all aspects of the document, including proofreading for grammar and punctuation errors. This is the time to *examine* the document's clarity and coherence as evidenced by its readability. The final step is to rewrite the first draft, incorporating *modifications* from the editing stage and ensuring that citations of sources, if necessary, are accurate.

The Power Writing Process (Informal Style)

To improve writing skills, writers should *think of* writing as an analytical process with five distinct *parts*: preparing, outlining, writing, editing, and rewriting. In the preparation stage, writers can clarify their purpose, audience,

and goal. They should also *find out* whether they have *enough* knowledge about their topic or will have to do research to *find* sources and gather information.

With an outline, writers can *rank* their information by constructing a thesis; major and minor points; and supporting data, such as facts, statistics, examples, and quotations. Following an outline *makes* the actual writing easier because the outline functions as a roadmap that efficiently guides writers to their logical destination.

In the writing stage, writers *change* their outlined thoughts into pages of paragraphs after they decide which style and tone would be appropriate for their purpose and audience. This is the *hardest* part of the process for many writers, whose *first* draft may not be clear, concise, or coherent.

Having completed the first draft, authors must *use* their editing ability to *check* and enhance the content, style, and organization of their documents. Skillful editing can involve a *great* amount of time. It *needs* concentration on all aspects of the document, including proofreading for grammar and punctuation errors. This is the time to *look over* the document's clarity and coherence as evidenced by its readability. The final step is to rewrite the first draft, incorporating *changes* from the editing stage and ensuring that citations of sources, if necessary, are accurate.

Evaluation of Style and Tone (page 121)

Style

personal	formal	technical	conversational
impersonal	informal	non-technical	scholarly

Tone

polite	subjective	friendly	negative	balanced
rude	objective	hostile	positive	persuasive

Evaluation: E-Mail Letters (page 123)

The letter written in a formal style is more effective in the situation of requesting free tickets for the Hoyas basketball games. The informal style is not appropriate for making such a major request.

Evaluation: E-Mail Memorandum (page 125)

The overall organization is deductive. The main idea is in the first paragraph:

“Although we appreciate the attempts to improve Internet access, we suggest that you and your staff make a concentrated effort to address this problem.”

The style is impersonal, formal, and non-technical. The tone is authoritative, serious and persuasive. The memo has many active verbs.

Analysis of Style and Tone

- number of multi-syllable (3 or more) words: 42
- complex sentence structures: 4 (These sentences are underlined.)
- compound sentence structures: 1
- pronouns: we, we, you, your, this, our, which
- adjectives: urban, other, total, lower, concentrated, basic, common, rural, second, high, rural, average, three, solar-electric, rural, efficient, necessary, solar, conventional, rural, mobile, all, significant, improved, living, accurate, better, broad, far-reaching
- adverbs: much, first, more, second, third
- active verbs: exceeds, appreciate, to improve, suggest, to address, make, shows, do not expect, to change, cannot afford, recommends, install, do not install, design, will save, authorize, to purchase, to distribute, supports, will bring, will have

Style

personal	journalistic	technical	formal	scholarly
impersonal	businesslike	non-technical	informal	factual

Tone

authoritative	humorous	supportive	negative	balanced
tentative	serious	critical	positive	persuasive

According to the report from the United Nations Task Force, the rate of Internet use in urban areas in Jabada exceeds the rates in other African countries. But the total percent of Internet users is much lower than the percent in other African countries. Although we appreciate the attempts to improve Internet access, we suggest that you and your staff make a concentrated effort to address this problem.

Our analysis shows that one cause of this low percent of Internet use in Jabada is the lack of basic infrastructure. Telephone and electric cables are not common in rural areas, and we do not expect this to change in the future. A second factor is the high poverty rate in the rural areas. The average family cannot afford to buy a computer.

The UN Task Force recommends the implementation of three measures. First, install solar-electric power generators in each rural community to provide electric power supplies for computers. This is more efficient than laying electric cables throughout the country because the necessary electric power for computers can be supplied by solar generators. Second, do not install conventional telephone lines in rural areas. Instead, design a mobile phone system, which will save time and money. Third, authorize the government to purchase computers to distribute to rural communities.

The UN Task force supports all efforts to develop Internet use in Jabada. The proliferation of the Internet will bring significant benefits to the people of Jabada: improved living conditions, accurate weather forecasts for farmers, better treatments for diseases, and broad access to information. These benefits will have far-reaching effects on the economy of the country and the well-being of its citizens.

CHAPTER 9: PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING (pages 128–46)

Analysis of a Press Release (page 132)

In the press release from the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, all five *W* questions (*who, what, when, where, why*) are answered in the first paragraph. The organization is deductive, with the main idea in the first paragraph.

The style of the release is impersonal, journalistic, and formal, and the tone is objective, positive, and emphatic.

Analysis of a Pitch Letter (page 134)

subjective	emotional	positive	argumentative	emphatic
objective	informative	negative	persuasive	understated

The organization of the letter is deductive restatement. The sentences that contain the main idea are in the first and the last paragraphs.

“I am writing to invite the Royal British Investment Corporation to invest in NDSI.”

“I believe that investment in NDSI will bring a sound return on investment to your company. I hope that you will consider this valuable opportunity.”

Analysis of Talking Points (page 136)

complex	personal	technical	concise	formal	direct
simple	impersonal	non-technical	redundant	informal	indirect

CHAPTER 10: THE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN (pages 147–62)

Analysis of Style: Executive Summary (page 154)**Style**

personal	journalistic	technical	scholarly	formal
impersonal	businesslike	non-technical	factual	informal

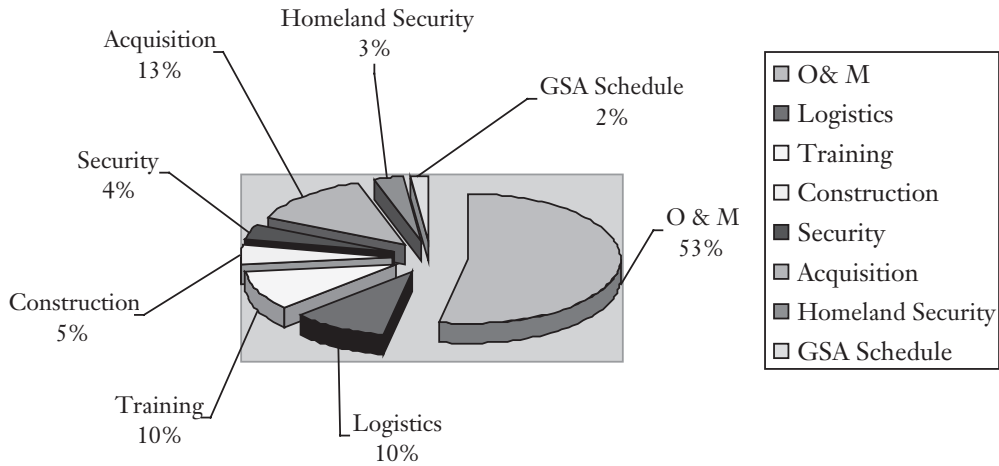
Tone

authoritative	humorous	friendly	negative	argumentative
tentative	serious	hostile	positive	persuasive

Visual Aids

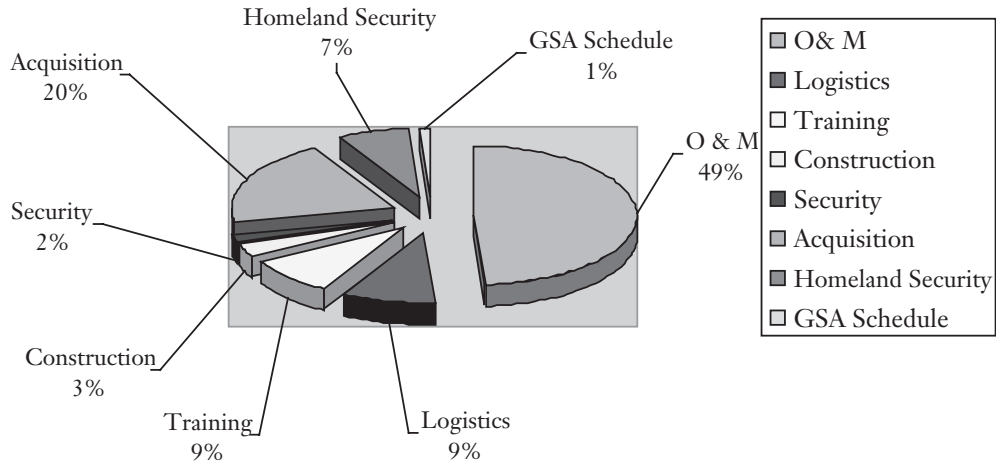
Teamwork: Data-Driven Charts (pages 158–59)

Figure 1.2: CY 2006: Projected Increase of Revenue by Division



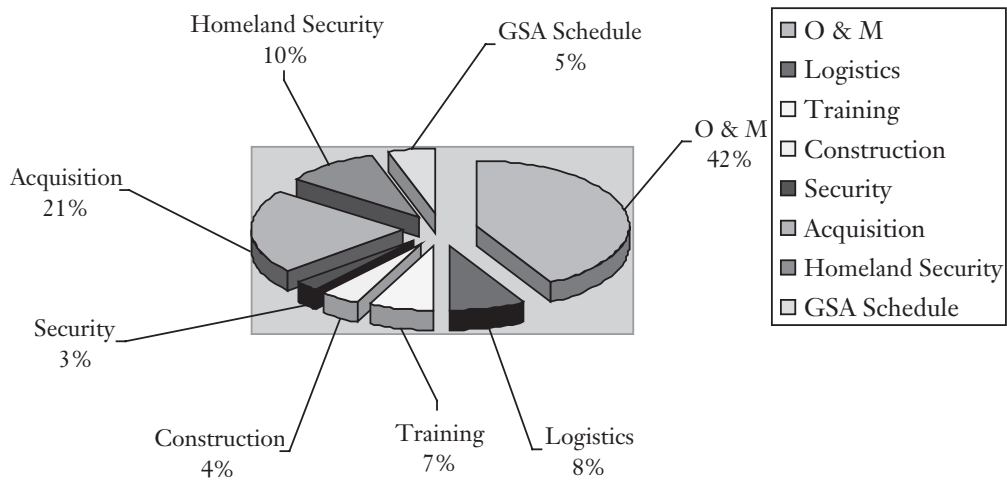
O & M	\$60,928,372	53%
Logistics	\$11,833,712	10%
Training	\$10,934,948	10%
Construction	\$ 6,006,281	5%
Security	\$ 4,035,852	4%
Acquisition	\$15,000,000	13%
Homeland Security	\$ 3,000,000	3%
GSA schedule	\$ 2,000,000	2%

Figure 1.3: CY 2007: Projected Increase of Revenue by Division



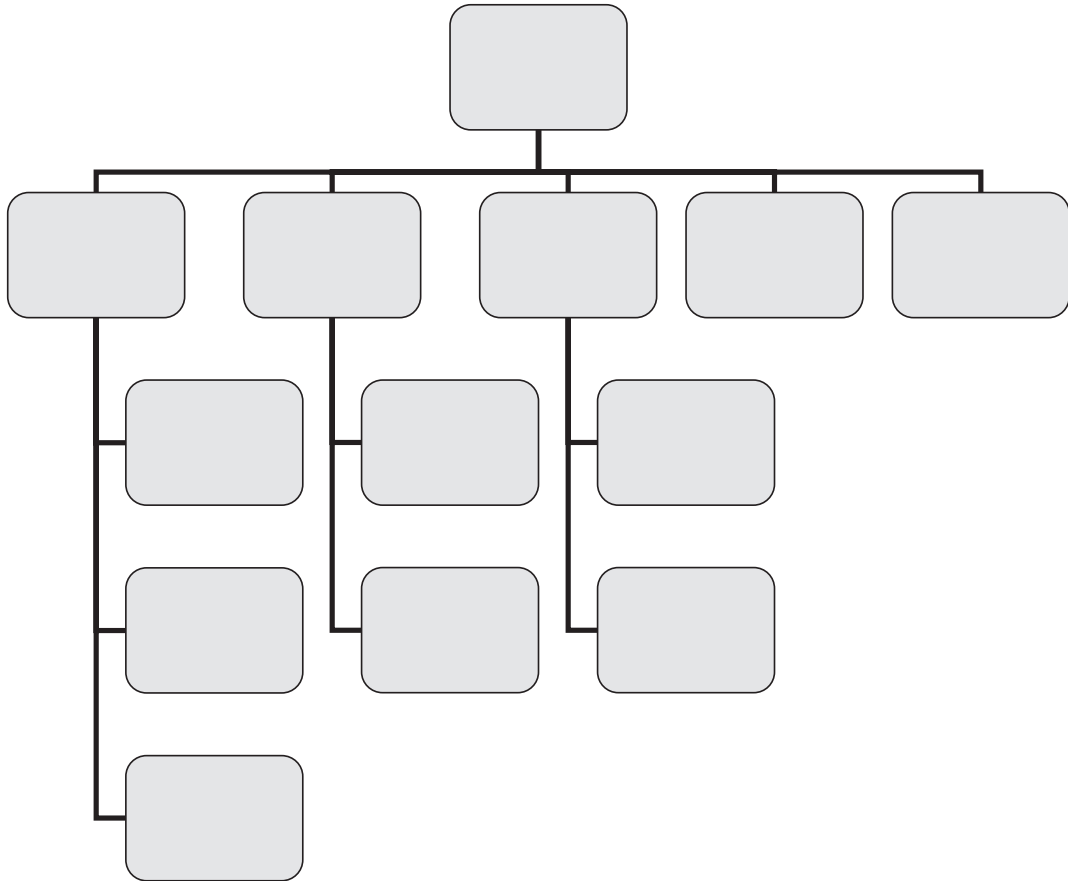
O & M	\$73,114,046	49%
Logistics	\$14,200,455	9%
Training	\$13,121,936	9%
Construction	\$ 5,005,234	3%
Security	\$ 3,363,210	2%
Acquisition	\$30,000,000	20%
Homeland Security	\$10,000,000	7%
GSA schedule	\$ 2,000,000	1%

Figure 1.4: CY 2008: Projected Increase of Revenue by Division



O & M	\$87,736,855	42%
Logistics	\$17,040,546	8%
Training	\$15,746,326	7%
Construction	\$ 8,649,044	4%
Security	\$ 5,811,627	3%
Acquisition	\$45,000,000	21%
Homeland Security	\$20,000,000	10%
GSA schedule	\$10,000,000	5%

Visual Aids
Teamwork: Organization Chart (page 159)



**CHAPTER 11: THE PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION
(pages 163–71)**

View the rough draft and revised version of “Effective Text for PowerPoint Presentations” by accessing the companion website for this textbook at *www.umichpress.edu/esl/*.

Overcoming Writer's Block

PREVIEW

- Free Writing
- Timed Writing
- Writer's Journal
- Response Writing

Do you enjoy writing? Do you feel confident about your writing skills? If you answered yes, you are in the minority. Furthermore, if you are not writing in your native language, you are facing an even greater challenge. Writing is hard work, and few people find it enjoyable, especially when doing writing assignments for a critical teacher or a demanding supervisor who will evaluate and edit your document. Because many people don't like to write, they often don't get started on their writing task in a timely manner and may procrastinate until the last minute. Even then, they may postpone doing the assignment and perhaps never do it. This type of counterproductive behavior is called writer's block, or writing anxiety.

Writer's block afflicts many people, from businesspersons to students to professional authors. But in the business world, this is a problem with the potential to cause serious and lasting damage. Business and technical writers are often given time-sensitive tasks, and it is critical that they meet their deadlines, so the ability to write efficiently, quickly, and confidently is essential. Those who cannot conquer their writer's block should not assume that this is a minor impediment to their career because excellent writing skills are one of the primary requirements for many jobs in the world of business today.

The methods offered can be modified to fit individual circumstances and requirements, but each, when done consistently, lessens the feelings of fear, helplessness, or nervousness that afflict people who face complex writing assignments and projects. If you would like to increase your enjoyment in writing and improve your efficiency, each day set aside a minimum of ten minutes for practicing one of these techniques. You can write on your computer or by hand if you prefer, but try to find a time when you can write without interruptions. Turn off your cell phone and TV. Make yourself comfortable, don't worry about all the rules you've learned, and just relax and write. If you are a music lover, play a CD or DVD.

WRITING ANXIETY QUESTIONNAIRE

Before experimenting with the methods that will help overcome writing anxiety, also known as writer's block, you might want to discover whether you suffer from this common problem. Read these statements, and select the appropriate number that best reflects your feelings.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neutral 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

1. I am not worried about my writing skills. _____
2. I do not have a problem completing writing tasks. _____
3. I don't postpone doing writing assignments. _____
4. Getting a writing assignment does not make me feel anxious. _____
5. I am generally confident about my writing skills. _____
6. I usually enjoy the writing process. _____
7. Taking a course in writing would be an enjoyable experience. _____
8. My knowledge of English grammar and mechanics is excellent. _____
9. My writing is logically organized and coherent. _____
10. My vocabulary in English is extensive. _____
11. My writing style is effective. _____
12. I have a good understanding of how to create an effective document. _____

Score: 12–24 = You have a serious case of writing anxiety.

25–36 = You have a moderate case of writing anxiety.

37–48 = You have confidence in your writing.

49–60 = You enjoy writing.

STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING WRITING ANXIETY

Four techniques that can lessen writing anxiety are described here. These techniques prepare writers to cope with their anxiety in ways that minimize stress and maximize flexibility, thus building confidence and enhancing enjoyment of the writing process.

Free Writing

Choose one word: it can be a color (*blue*), or a feeling (*sadness*), or the name of a person you know. Any word can be used. Write this word at the top of your page. Then start writing about this word, letting your mind make connections with this word, no matter how unusual. Do not worry about grammar, punctuation, or the other mechanics of writing. Forget about logical organization. Instead, use free association to keep writing for about ten minutes. See where your mind takes you.

Timed Writing

Think about a current problem or challenge in your life, and write about this issue without stopping for at least ten minutes. The goal is to continue writing and expressing your thoughts. Do not worry about grammar, punctuation, or the other mechanics of writing. Just practice turning your ideas into written form. You may be surprised to see that a solution to your problem has emerged while you are writing.

Writer's Journal

Keep a journal, sometimes called a diary. Write in it every day or every night. This journal should be more than a listing of your daily activities; it should be a chance to express your emotions and concerns—a record of your private thoughts, hopes, dreams, plans, ideas, and memories. What, when, and how much you choose to write is up to you, but don't forget to write on a regular basis. Once you get in the habit of writing in your journal, you will not feel content unless you make your daily entry.

Response Writing

Read an article from an online news source or the newspaper, or choose a literary work, such as a poem or a short story. After you finish reading, write a

personal response in one or two paragraphs, without taking time to revise. Explain how you felt about this article or literary work, whether you agreed with the author's ideas, or what the most memorable aspect was. Ask questions about what you read. Do not worry about grammar, punctuation, or the other mechanics of writing. The important point of this activity is to respond to the reading while it is still fresh in your mind. Practice in response writing will sharpen your ability to organize your thoughts quickly and write them down concisely.



TASK Free Writing: Time

The purpose of this type of writing task is to enhance your writing skills by freeing you from the numerous restrictions on format, content, organization, and style that writers usually have to accept. If you practice free writing on a daily basis, you will gain confidence in your writing and improve your ability to transform thoughts from your mind into words on the page.

Write the word *time* at the top of your page, and do freewriting for ten minutes. Just relax and let free association guide your thinking and writing. While you are writing, do not worry about grammar, punctuation, and the other mechanics of writing. At the end of ten minutes, read what you have written and circle a word (but not the word *time*) that you have used more than once in your freewriting. Write that circled word at the top of a second page, and then write for ten more minutes of freewriting. When you are finished, share your writing with your classmates, and discuss your reaction to this activity with the class.

How did you enjoy this free writing?

How easy was it for you to keep writing for ten minutes? And then another ten minutes?

Are you pleased with what you wrote?

**TASK** Response Writing: Marriage Past and Present

Read the following passage about marriage. After thinking about the ideas in the paragraphs, write a response to the ideas. While you are writing, do not worry about grammar, punctuation, and the other mechanics of writing. The purpose of this activity is to give you practice in communicating your thoughts in written form in a spontaneous manner, without allowing for any revision. When you have completed your response, share it with the class by reading it aloud.

Marriage Past and Present

The convention of marriage began many centuries ago as a way to protect the wealth of families. In the earliest conception of marriage, men and women from the upper classes married each other as a means of keeping their financial assets and real estate within their families. Besides the expansion of family property, people married to build political alliances or to strengthen social obligations, such as providing a stable environment for the raising of children. Today, these traditional purposes of marriage have disappeared to a large extent. If a man and a woman decide to become husband and wife, it is usually unrelated to considerations of wealth or the stability of society. Most people marry because of a desire for both romantic love and long-term companionship.

Also, the definition of marriage is currently undergoing a revision in light of the laws in Massachusetts, the Netherlands, Belgium, and three Canadian provinces that allow men to marry men and women to marry women. "These laws give gay couples "not only the rights and obligations of mar-

riage but the word itself.”¹ Such same-sex marriages have led to a “struggle over the meaning and purpose of matrimony.”² It is possible that these marriages will transform and liberalize the traditional concept of marriage by challenging the idea that only a man and a woman can wed. Certainly, the definition of marriage will continue to be debated around the world.

Response:



TASK Response Writing: George Bernard Shaw

What is your opinion on the institution of marriage? Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages? What sacrifices do people make when they marry? In the quotation that follows, the 20th-century British author George Bernard Shaw makes a statement about marriage. After thinking about Shaw’s quotation, write a response.

While you are writing, do not worry about grammar, punctuation, and the other mechanics of writing. The purpose of this activity is to give you practice in communicating your thoughts in written form in a spontaneous manner, without allowing for any revision. When you have completed your response, share it with the class by reading it aloud.

“The greatest sacrifice in marriage is the sacrifice of the adventurous attitude toward life: the being settled.”³

Response

¹Adam Haslett, “Love Supreme: Gay Nuptials and the Making of Modern Marriage,” *The New Yorker* 31 May 2004, 76.

²Haslett, 76.

³George Bernard Shaw, Preface to *Androcles and the Lion*, 1912. Note: A *sacrifice* is something a person gives up. *Being settled* means living according to a regular routine and an established pattern.

Proofreading and Editing Review

PREVIEW

- **Proofreading**
 - Grammar
 - Mechanics
 - Format
- **Editing**
 - Content
 - Organization
 - Style
- **Readability**

Proofreading and editing are two separate cognitive processes, and they involve different aspects of a document and different critical thinking skills. Therefore, you should not proofread and edit a document simultaneously. When you are proofreading, you have to identify and correct errors in the grammar and mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, spelling, abbreviations, use of numbers) of your paper. You also have to determine whether the format, the visual design of a document, is appropriate and consistent. Being a good proofreader requires precision, patience, and knowledge of English grammar and mechanics. Your final goal is to ensure the accuracy of the entire document.

When you are editing, you have to consider the content, organization, and style of your paper and make revisions that improve these aspects. Being a good editor requires a strong foundation in all the interrelated skills of writing because you are evaluating the overall quality and impact of a document. You should proofread and edit your first draft, rewrite it with necessary changes, and proofread your final draft before handing it in.

Having edited and proofread your document, you are helping your reader to interpret and understand your message easily, which means that your document has readability. This is a characteristic of excellent writing that results from producing a document that is clear, coherent, concise, and precise. If the language of your document is unclear, incoherent, redundant, and imprecise, your reader may not understand the message, which is a failure of communication.

STRATEGIES

Proofreading Principles

Grammar: The document is written in standard English grammar.

Mechanics: The mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, spelling, abbreviations, number use) are correct.

Format: The format is appropriate and consistent, according to the standard visual design for each type of document, whether an essay or a business letter.

Editing Principles

Content: The content of a document is substantive, meaningful, and relevant.

Organization: The organization is logical and coherent.

Style: The style is clear, coherent, concise, and precise, and adapted to the purpose and audience.

Readability

Readability is a characteristic that refers to how easily a reader can understand your message. A document with readability is appropriate in style, consistent in tone, accurate in content, and logical in organization. Of course, grammar and punctuation errors detract from readability.

Readability results from a variety of factors including how many long sentences and multi-syllable words you have used. Writing with short, concrete words rather than complex, abstract words and with simple, complex, or compound sentences rather than long compound-complex sentences will increase the readability of any document. The length of paragraphs also influences readability. Readers are discouraged when they are faced with extremely long paragraphs. They appreciate taking in information in small chunks.

The readability formula is part of many software grammar check programs, and it is a good tool to use after you have completed your first draft. The final number that results from applying the readability formula is equal to a grade level and tells you how difficult your document is to read. Most readability experts suggest that you aim for 12 (12th grade) or even lower to insure the readability of your document. (You can apply the Flesch-Kincaid Reading Level analysis to your writing by using the grammar check in Microsoft Word's software program.)

Readability Analysis

Using the readability formula, analyze the readability of the following paragraph, which is from an essay titled "My Experience with Culture Shock." The paragraph has 100 words.

Readability Formula⁴

1. Count 100 words of a document.
2. Count the number of sentences in the section of 100 words.
3. Divide the number of words by the number of sentences.

⁴Robert Gunning and Douglas Mueller, *How to Take the Fog Out of Writing* (Chicago: The Dartnell Corporation, 1981) 9–11.

4. Count the number of words with three or more syllables. Do not include capitalized words or verbs.
5. Add the result of #3 and #4 together.
6. Multiply the result of #5 by 0.4 (the readability factor).
7. The result is the readability level of the document. The number is equal to the number of years of education a person needs to understand the document.

Example: 20 (average number of words per sentence)
 +10 (number of multi-syllable words)
 30 x 0.4 = 12 (12th grade readability level)

“My Experience with Culture Shock”

I came to study in the United States in the fall of 2005 after graduating from my high school in Ankara, Turkey. I chose Washington, DC, having heard that the city was really beautiful, offered many cultural attractions, and had an international population. When I first arrived at Georgetown University, located in northwest Washington, I was excited and happy to be starting a new and challenging life. However, after about one month, culture shock affected me. I had trouble communicating in English, I couldn't adjust to American college life, and the liberal attitudes of Americans made me feel uncomfortable.

CONCISE GRAMMAR REVIEW

Writers must be familiar with the rules and conventions of English grammar and punctuation in order to proofread a document skillfully. To evaluate your knowledge of standard English grammar, read the following brief explanations of major grammar points and the examples of the most common errors made by writers. If you cannot correct these basic errors, you may need a comprehensive review of English grammar and punctuation. There are many books that contain rules and examples, such as *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White, 4th edition, which is a popular and useful reference on writing. You can also access websites that provide information on this topic. These are two of the best sites:

- Purdue University Online Writing Laboratory: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
- The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Writers' Workshop: www.english.uiuc.edu/cws/wworkshop/

Common Grammar Problems

After reviewing the grammar points, read the sentences and correct the underlined errors in these sentences.

Subject-verb agreement: A subject must agree with its verb in number. A singular subject needs a singular verb. A plural subject needs a plural verb.

Example of error: The questions on the history exam about the causes of the Civil War was difficult.

Pronoun-referent number agreement: A pronoun must agree in number with its referent, the noun to which it refers. A singular pronoun refers to a singular noun. A plural pronoun refers to a plural noun. (Note that gender-neutral language requires the words *he or she* and *his or her*, instead of *he* and *his*.)

Example of error: Each student brought their laptop computer to the conference.

Dangling modifier: A dangling modifier is a phrase that has no logical subject.

Example of error: Having done all the interviews, the data had to be analyzed.

Misplaced modifier: A misplaced modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that is not located next to the word it is modifying.

Example of error: He brought the negotiating skills book back to the library that the teacher had assigned.

Preposition usage: A preposition is a function word that generally connects a noun or pronoun to another element of the sentence. (She threw the ball *over* the wall.) It is also used with verbs to form two-word verbs, such as *get off* the bus. Using prepositions correctly is a challenge to almost everyone, but you can succeed if you focus on their meaning. Pay attention to prepositions when you read books, magazines, and newspapers in English and listen carefully to the spoken language. Eventually you will succeed in mastering prepositions.

Example of error: The project leader asked us to think on what we planned to include on the report of immigration.

Article usage: Articles are used with nouns to limit or modify their meaning. Although English has only three articles, *a*, *an*, and *the*, their usage is quite complicated. The indefinite articles (*a* and *an*) are used to describe a countable noun in general. (*I ate an apple*.) The definite article *the* is used to specify a particular noun, whether countable or uncountable. (*The Fuji apple that I ate was delicious. The snow that was predicted did not arrive*.)

Example of error: Eating the orange every day and drinking *a* milk will keep you healthy.

Verb tenses: A verb functions to express an action, an occurrence, or a state of being. Since verbs are the heart of a sentence, writers who can use verb tenses correctly are able to convey their meaning precisely. The English language has simple, perfect, and progressive verb tenses, and writers should be familiar with the commonly used present, present perfect, past, past perfect, future, and future perfect tenses in particular, along with the progressive and conditional forms of these tenses.

Example of error: I am wanting to stay fit, so I am deciding to go to the gym every day.

Example of error: Before talking to her professor, Jane has carefully read the homework assignment.

Example of error: Juan Carlos will have complete his MBA by the time he gets married on June 16.

Example of error: I would transfer to a different school if I was you.

Parallelism: Similar ideas should be written in similar grammatical form. This technique can add to the effectiveness of your writing when you are using a series in a sentence, correlative conjunctions (*not only- but also, both- and, neither-nor, either-or*), a list with bullets, and headings in a report.

Example of error: She was interested in doing research on not only the causes of the economic instability in Argentina but also how the Brazilian financial crisis was being solved.

 **PARALLELISM PRACTICE**

Because parallelism can have a great impact on the quality of a document, experienced writers use this technique whenever possible. Parallelism is effective when used in headings of reports, outlines, lists, and within sentences. To practice your skill in detecting errors in parallelism, correct the sentences below so that they are in parallel form.

1. The final assignment involves choosing a research topic, to read five sources, and to complete a ten-page research paper with footnotes and a bibliography.
2. Working in a global corporation may be more difficult than to start your own consulting company.
3. The new position neither presents more challenges than the former job nor will she receive a higher salary.
4. Jane's internship in the Wall Street firm has been effective in increasing her knowledge of stock and bond trading, sharpening her technical skills, and in a great improvement in her ability to negotiate.
5. Students unusually well prepared by taking advanced placement courses and who have high SAT scores on the verbal test will be exempted from College Writing at the University of Virginia.
6. The research study will consider the growing number of obese people in the United States, why people are exercising less, and that the portions of food in restaurants have become larger.
7. Alberto will have to take courses in both technical writing and how to design graphics.
8. The director asked for the following information: the instructor's name, how many participants were enrolled, and the location of the workshop.

CONCISE PUNCTUATION REVIEW: PERIOD, COMMA, SEMICOLON, COLON, QUOTATION MARKS

Read the rules for these punctuation marks, and discuss the examples that follow the rules.

Period Usage

Put a period at the end of a sentence.

Jacob is writing a paper on the French Revolution in 1789. He has always had an interest in that subject because his family is of French origin.

Comma Usage

Separate independent clauses with a comma if they are divided by a conjunction.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper, but he still didn't hand it in on time.

Follow a sentence connector that introduces an independent clause with a comma.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper; nevertheless, he still didn't hand it in on time.

Separate items in a series with commas.

Erica's paper compared the economies of Brazil, Peru, Argentina, and Colombia. (Today the comma before *and* in a series is optional.)

Semicolon Usage

Separate two independent clauses with a semicolon if they are closely related in thought and no conjunction connects them.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper; he still didn't hand it in on time.

Use a semicolon before a sentence connector that connects two independent clauses.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper; however, he still didn't hand it in on time.

Use a semicolon to separate items in a series that have internal punctuation.

During her vacation, Erica traveled to these locations in Latin America: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Lima, Peru; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Bogota, Colombia.

Colon Usage

A colon is used after **an independent clause** to indicate that the following information is needed to complete the meaning of the sentence.

Erica explained the purpose of the paper: to determine the extent to which economic stability and direct investment were related in Latin American countries.

A colon is used to introduce a formal quotation.

In "Speed" (*The New Yorker*, August 23, 2004), Oliver Sacks states: "As a boy, I was fascinated by speed, the wild range of speeds in the world around me. People moved at different speeds; animals much more so."

Quotation Mark Usage

Double quotation marks are used for direct quotations.

The lecturer said: "Communication is the process of exchanging information among people."

Note: Quotations introduced by *that* are indirect and do not require quotation marks.

The lecturer said that communication is the process of exchanging information among people.

Double quotation marks are placed around words, phrases, and sentences that are copied exactly from a source, such as an article, book, or website. Double quotation marks are also placed around the title of an article in a magazine or journal or a book chapter.

According to Laura D'Andrea Tyson in "For Developing Countries, Health Is Wealth," the poor health of people in developing countries "both reflects their poverty and contributes to it" (20).

CONCISE PUNCTUATION REVIEW: **———— COMMA SPLICE, RUN-ON SENTENCE, FRAGMENT ————**

After reviewing the punctuation rules, read the sentences that are not punctuated correctly. Then review the different ways the errors can be corrected.

Comma Splice

A comma splice is two complete sentences (independent clauses) connected with a comma. Do not connect two independent clauses with a comma. Use a period or a semicolon, or a comma followed by a conjunction. You can also restructure the sentence with an adverbial clause.

Error: Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper, he still didn't hand it in on time.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper. He still didn't hand it in on time.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper; he still didn't hand it in on time.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper, but he still didn't hand it in on time.

Although Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper, he still didn't hand it in on time.

Run-on Sentence

A run-on sentence is two complete sentences (independent clauses) connected without any punctuation to separate them. Two independent clauses should be separated by a period, a semicolon, or a comma followed by a conjunction. You can also restructure the sentence with an adverbial clause.

Error: Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper he still didn't hand it in on time.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper. He still didn't hand it in on time.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper; he still didn't hand it in on time.

Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper, but he still didn't hand it in on time.

Although Jacob stayed up all night to finish the paper, he still didn't hand it in on time.

Sentence Fragment

A sentence fragment is a group of words that ends with a period but does not form a complete sentence. A sentence must have a subject, predicate, and complete meaning.

Error: Incomplete meaning (No independent clause): Because of the extremely negative financial analysis.

Because of the extremely negative financial analysis, she didn't invest her money in that fund.

Error: No predicate: Students that don't own cell phones.

Students that don't own cell phones may be at a disadvantage.

Error: No subject: Is a controversial topic.

Capital punishment is a controversial topic.



PUNCTUATION EXERCISE 1: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Read the statements and identify them as correct (C), fragment (F), run-on (R), and comma splice (CS). Correct the fragments, run-ons, and comma splices by adding necessary punctuation and/or words. (There are many ways to correct these errors, so discuss the various possibilities when checking your answers in class.)

- _____ 1. The question of whether to hold a formal graduation ceremony.
- _____ 2. Mr. Warren is our new dean of students he does not have a Ph.D.
- _____ 3. The issue under consideration today.
- _____ 4. Although Karl is an expert on bilingual education, he is not on the policy committee.
- _____ 5. To show the exact steps in the procedure.
- _____ 6. The computer is working fairly well, nevertheless, we are hoping to trade it in for a new one.
- _____ 7. Because his research paper is coming along so slowly.
- _____ 8. While Sandra has much experience in PowerPoint, we don't want her to do the training.
- _____ 9. Although her spoken English is better than mine.
- _____ 10. Her spoken English is better than mine, but I have better listening skills.
- _____ 11. Their decision was based on extensive analysis, however, I disagree with it.
- _____ 12. Ms. Gresham is in charge of our computer system, she has a master's degree in information technology.
- _____ 13. Mr. Mendez is our Internet coordinator he also works on advance planning.
- _____ 14. If Lucy has the time and energy.
- _____ 15. Since Gloria has the time, she will be able to run the conference.
- _____ 16. That report from the director is both comprehensive and persuasive.
- _____ 17. Going to make a change in the requirements next semester.
- _____ 18. Oscar went to the library to get the videotapes, then he brought the tapes to the classroom.
- _____ 19. That clever and sophisticated student from Taiwan.

- _____ 20. Hiroko is a reliable and creative student, we need more students like her.
- _____ 21. Ms. Donovan, using her laptop computer and talking on her cell phone.
- _____ 22. Giorgio and Claudia are finally having their meeting, in fact, they plan to meet once a week.
- _____ 23. Have all the members of the class responded to the survey?
- _____ 24. Even though his suggestion has validity.
- _____ 25. Having finished the presentation on culture shock, the speaker answered questions from the audience.



PUNCTUATION EXERCISE 2: PARAGRAPH COHERENCE

Some of the following statements are correct, but most contain punctuation and sentence structure errors. Correct the errors so that all the sentences together form a logical paragraph. Do not change the order of the sentences, but you should connect several statements and add necessary words. (There are many ways to do this task; no one way is correct.)

1. Being fluent in English is essential today, especially now that English has become the global language.
2. Is something almost everyone will have to master in the future.
3. When you can speak English, you have many advantages.
4. For example being able to communicate with other English speakers around the world.
5. Although it is not easy to master English.
6. There are many different methods you can use to learn this language.

7. Including studying in an intensive English program, hiring a tutor for private classes, and watching television and movies.
8. An intensive English course is generally the best method, in fact studying in a group is an excellent way to get support and encouragement.
9. Of course motivation is important in studying a foreign language.
10. Because research on language acquisition shows that highly motivated people learn more quickly than those who aren't as motivated.
11. Nevertheless, even if they have strong motivation.
12. Most people need six months to a year to become proficient.
13. Just like many challenges in life.
14. Learning English may be difficult and discouraging at times remember that it is well worth the time and effort involved.



**PROOFREADING AND EDITING:
“MY HEALTHY LIFESTYLE”**

Work with a partner to evaluate the rough draft of the short essay “My Healthy Lifestyle.” First proofread the essay by identifying errors in grammar and mechanics and correcting them. Use the Proofreader’s Checklist, underlining the mistakes you find. Then edit the essay’s content, style, and organization, using the Editor’s Checklist. After you complete the proofreading and editing, discuss your corrections and revisions with your classmates, and compare your revisions with the corrected version of the essay on page 54.

PROOFREADER'S CHECKLIST**Grammar**

- Do the verbs agree with their subjects?
- Do pronouns agree with their referents?
- Are there any dangling modifiers?
- Are prepositions used correctly?
- Are articles used correctly?
- Are verb tenses used correctly?
- Are parallel structures used when appropriate?

Punctuation

- Are there any comma splices, run-on sentences, or sentence fragments?
- Are periods, commas, semi-colons, and colons used correctly?
- Are quotation marks used correctly for direct quotations?

EDITOR'S CHECKLIST

- Does the introduction end with a precise thesis statement?
- Do the body paragraphs support the thesis statement (main idea)?
- Does each body paragraph have a topic sentence related to the thesis?
- Do the remaining sentences in each paragraph support the topic sentence?
- Are facts, statistics, examples, or quotations used to expand on the topic sentence?
- Are the paragraphs unified, coherent, and appropriate in length?
- Do sentence connectors (transition words) add coherence to the paragraphs?
- Are the verbs, adjectives, and adverbs used effectively?
- Is the conclusion meaningful and logical?
- Is the style of the document clear and concise, without redundancy?

My Healthy Lifestyle

Since I have been in Washington, DC, my lifestyle has been generally healthy in regards to my diet but I exercise more in Colombia compared to here. Actually, I try to keep myself healthy everyday. Fortunately, there are many excellent inexpensive restaurants and many sightseeing places and museum where I can walk around in Washington, DC. It's nice opportunity to eat anything and to exercise. And I remember not to eat too much fat and sugar whenever I eat. Of course sometimes is difficult to do, especially since fast food restaurant as McDonalds are everywhere I look. Living in Washington, DC, is different than life in Colombia in many ways.

After I came to the United States, it is true that my eating habit has changed. I no longer eat Latin American food that is my favorite food that I eat everyday in Colombia. Really I am missing the fresh fruits and vegetables of my country. But, I can eat anything and I am flexible and curious about any food. I enjoy eating very much. In the United States, I can choose any kinds of food everywhere, because there are many foodstuffs. Thus I thinking about what is good for my health. I guess is important to think about what is needed to my health and pay attention for nutrition, no matter where I am. If I can do it, I must keep myself healthy while staying here.

On the other hand, it is difficult for me to exercise. Because I don't like the cold weather and in fact, I don't have as much time to exercise as in Colombia. But since I like walking, I walk between the Roslyn metro station

and the university sometimes. Although this is only a small thing, I think is more helpful for my health to do something than do nothing. In addition, I go to walk around Washington on the weekend, which is a beautiful city, taking care about my health and getting the exercise. For example last weekend I have walked from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument.

I really enjoy my life in Washington, DC, and I adjusted to this new culture real well. And I would like to take advantage from the rest of my stay here, therefore, I plan to keep myself healthy until I come back to Colombia. No matter where I am living, thinking about diet and nutrition by myself are important, exercise should also be a priority.

Answers to Proofreading and Editing

Readability Analysis (page 40)

“My Experience with Culture Shock”

I came to study in the United States in the fall of 2005 after graduating from my high school in Ankara, Turkey. I chose Washington, DC, having heard that the city was really beautiful, offered many cultural attractions, and had an international population. When I first arrived at Georgetown University, located in northwest Washington, I was excited and happy to be starting a new and challenging life. However, after about one month, culture shock affected me. I had trouble communicating in English, I couldn't adjust to American college life, and the liberal attitudes of Americans made me feel uncomfortable.

100 words

5 sentences

100 divided by 5 = 20

13 multi-syllable words

13

+ 20

33 x 0.4 = 13.2: readability at the graduate school level (1 year above 12th grade)

Concise Grammar Review: Common Grammar Problems (page 42)

Subject-verb agreement:

The questions on the history exam about the causes of the Civil War were difficult.

Pronoun-referent number agreement:

Example of error: Every student brought his or her laptop computer to the conference.

Dangling modifier:

Having done all the interviews, the researcher had to analyze the data.

Misplaced modifier:

He brought the negotiating skills book that the teacher had assigned back to the library.

Preposition usage:

The project leader asked us to think about what we planned to include in the report on immigration.

Article usage:

Eating an orange every day and drinking milk will keep you healthy.

Verb tenses:

I want to stay fit, so I have decided to go to the gym every day.

Before talking to her professor, Jane had carefully read the homework assignment.

Juan Carlos will have completed his MBA by the time he gets married on June 16.

I would transfer to a different school if I were you.

Parallelism:

She was interested in doing research on not only the causes of the economic instability in Argentina but also the solutions to the Brazilian financial crisis.

Parallelism Practice (page 45)

1. The final assignment involves choosing a research topic, reading five sources, and completing a ten-page research paper with footnotes and a bibliography.
2. Working in a global corporation may be more difficult than starting your own consulting company.
3. The new position neither presents more challenges than the former job nor pays a higher salary.
4. Jane's internship in the Wall Street firm has been effective in increasing her knowledge of stock and bond trading, sharpening her technical skills, and greatly improving her ability to negotiate.
5. Students who are unusually well prepared by taking advanced placement courses and who have high SAT scores on the verbal test will be exempted from College Writing at the University of Virginia.
6. The research study will consider the growing number of obese people in the United States, the decrease in exercise, and the increase in portions of restaurant food.
7. Alberto will have to take courses in both technical writing and graphic design.
8. The director asked for the following information: name of the instructor, number of participants, and location of the workshop.

Punctuation Exercise 1: Sentence Structure (page 50)

There are many ways to correct these errors, so discuss the various possibilities when checking your answers in class.

- | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|
| 1. F | 10. C | 19. F |
| 2. R | 11. CS | 20. CS |
| 3. F. | 12. CS | 21. F |
| 4. C | 13. R | 22. CS |
| 5. F | 14. F | 23. C |
| 6. CS | 15. C | 24. F |
| 7. F | 16. C | 25. C |
| 8. C | 17. F | |
| 9. F | 18. CS | |

Punctuation Exercise 1: Sentence Structure (Revision) (page 50)

There are many ways to correct these sentence structure errors, so discuss the various possibilities when checking your answers in class. Revisions may include the following:

1. The question of whether to hold a formal graduation ceremony has not been resolved.
2. Mr. Warren is our new dean of students, but he does not have a Ph.D.
3. The issue is under consideration today.
4. Although Karl is an expert on bilingual education, he is not on the policy committee.
5. It is necessary to show the exact steps in the procedure.
6. The computer is working fairly well; nevertheless, we are hoping to trade it in for a new one.
7. Because his research paper is coming along so slowly, he can't attend the party.
8. While Sandra has much experience in PowerPoint, we don't want her to do the training.
9. Although her spoken English is better than mine, I write better than she does.
10. Her spoken English is better than mine, but I have better listening skills.
11. Their decision was based on extensive analysis; however, I disagree with it.
12. Ms. Gresham is in charge of our computer system; she has a master's degree in information technology.
13. Mr. Mendez is our Internet coordinator, and he also works on advance planning.
14. If Lucy has the time and energy, she will accept the extra assignment.
15. Since Gloria has the time, she will be able to run the conference.
16. That report from the director is both comprehensive and persuasive.
17. The dean is going to make a change in the requirements next semester.
18. Oscar went to the library to get the videotapes; then he brought the tapes to the classroom.
19. That clever and sophisticated student is from Taiwan.
20. Hiroko is a reliable and creative student; indeed, we need more students like her.

21. Ms. Donovan was using her laptop computer and talking on her cell phone.
22. Giorgio and Claudia are finally having their meeting; in fact, they plan to meet once a week.
23. Have all the members of the class responded to the survey?
24. Even though his suggestion has validity, I do not agree with it.
25. Having finished the presentation on culture shock, the speaker answered questions from the audience.

Punctuation Exercise 2: Paragraph Coherence (page 51)

There are many ways to correct these sentence structure errors, so discuss the various possibilities when checking your answers in class. Revisions may include the following:

Combine sentences 3 and 4; 5, 6, and 7; 9 and 10; 11 and 12; 13 and 14. Here is one version of the combined paragraph.

Being fluent in English is essential today, especially now that English has become the global language. It is something almost everyone will have to master in the future. When you can speak English, you have many advantages, for example, being able to communicate with other English speakers around the world. Although it is not easy to master English, there are many different methods you can use to learn this language, including studying in an intensive English program, hiring a tutor for private classes, and watching television and movies. An intensive English course is generally the best method; in fact, studying in a group is an excellent way to get support and encouragement. Of course, motivation is important in studying a foreign language because research on language acquisition shows that highly motivated people learn more quickly than those who aren't as motivated. Nevertheless, even if they have strong motivation, most people need six months to a year to become proficient. Just like many challenges in life, learning English may be difficult and discouraging at times, so remember that it is well worth the time and effort involved.

Writing Bio Data Statements

PREVIEW

- Coherence
- Varied Sentence Structure
- Formal Business Style

Professionals in the business world are often called upon to produce a bio data statement, especially when they are giving presentations at a conference or speaking at a symposium. This one- or two-paragraph description of accomplishments should present the highlights of a person's life. The bio data statement, which is written in the third person (he/she), requires a formal business style that does not include idiomatic language, slang, or contractions.

Writing this short biographical sketch can be difficult, compared to the comprehensiveness of a resume or the narrative style of a personal statement. Indeed, it requires careful planning and organization and a sharp eye for the best word or phrase. When writing this statement, you should aim for accuracy, clarity, and precision.

STRATEGIES

Coherence

The bio data statement should be a precise and brief portrait that contains the major facts of a person's life, with emphasis on accomplishments and honors. The key to writing a coherent bio data statement is creating a paragraph in which each sentence leads naturally to the following sentence. This requires using chronological order in most cases. Sentence connectors, like *thus* and *however*, and adverbs of time may also add to the coherence.



ASSIGNMENT

Coherence: Wan-Yi Liu

Arrange these sentences in a logical order to create a coherent bio data statement about Wan-Yi Liu. Add sentence connectors if appropriate.

Wan-Yi Liu was born in 1980 and comes from Taiwan.

She graduated from Fu-Jen University with a major in communication and visual media.

She graduated from the university in 2003.

She started to work in a television program production company in 2004.

Her job was to produce a variety show.

She enjoyed that job very much because she met many people and learned a great deal.

In 2005, she left her job and came to the United States in order to improve her English skills and gain more cross-cultural experience.

She plans to go back to Taiwan in 2006 and look for a job as a magazine editor.

Her family includes her father, mother and an older brother.

Her older brother is going to get married in 2006.

Ms. Liu is looking forward to having a sister-in-law.

She and her fiancé will also have a wedding in Taiwan next year.

In her free time, she loves reading, watching television, shopping, and traveling.

If she has a chance, she wants to visit Egypt to see the great historical heritage and go to Tahiti to enjoy the beautiful ocean and sunshine.

Varied Sentence Structure

The second important characteristic of effective bio data statements is variety of sentence structures, rather than sentences that all begin with *he* or *she*. For example, try starting a sentence with adverbial clauses: *After she moved to Taiwan in 2003, . . .* Or use prepositional phrases: *In her work as a journalist, . . .* Also, begin with participial phrases, such as the following: *Having graduated in 1996, she went to work in the field of TV production.*



ASSIGNMENT

Revision and Variety

Revise the following bio data statements so that the sentences are written in a variety of structures.

Claudia Aguilera was born in Mexico City in 1977. She attended Anahuac University in Mexico City. She majored in communication and graphic design, graduating in 2001, and wrote a thesis titled “Photography Handbook for Beginners.” She also received a Professional International Cuisine diploma and took a course in Mexican cuisine. She studied photography in February 2003 at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.

Ms. Aguilera worked from 2003 to 2005 as an Account Executive for Ogilvy & Mather in Mexico City. She developed marketing briefs, made contacts with clients, and was in charge of the production of TV advertisements.

Alex Mendez was born in Bogota, Colombia, in 1976. He graduated in 1999 from Javeriana University with a major in journalism, a field to which he is dedicated. He was an intern at two Colombian newspapers during his studies. Then he wrote for *Cambio*, a Colombian magazine owned by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. He worked with the Mayor of Bogota from 1998 to 2001. Mr. Mendez entered Reuters News Agency as a correspondent for Colombia, where he covered politics, culture, and the economy. Currently, he works for Reuters and focuses on a variety of Latin American issues.

Formal Business Style

A bio data statement is characterized by a formal business style, which is largely determined by the word choice; for example, the writer uses polysyllabic words such as *assistance*, rather than *help*, or *demonstrate*, rather than *show*. First-person pronouns (*I, we*) and second-person pronouns (*you*) are avoided; instead, the writer uses the third person (*he, she*) to create an objective style. Contractions and idiomatic language are not appropriate in a bio data statement. The overall tone is impersonal, balanced, and factual, and this tone should be consistent throughout the document.



INTERVIEW AND BIO DATA STATEMENT

After you interview a member of your class, write the answers to these questions. Then write a 100-word bio data statement about your partner, selecting the most significant information from the interview and omitting what is not important. Give your first draft to your partner, and ask for comments and revisions. When you have written the second draft, share your completed statements with your classmates.

1. full name
2. place of birth
3. reason for choosing this academic program
4. educational background
5. work experience
6. goals after completing the program
7. future career or study plans
8. languages spoken
9. travel experience
10. hobbies and special skills
11. favorite music
12. favorite books

**ASSIGNMENT****Bio Data Statement**

Read the following 100-word bio data statement. Then write a 100-word bio data statement about yourself.

Miho Sakata Malhan was born in Fukuoka, Japan. She graduated with honors from Baiko Jogakuin University in 1987 with a major in modern Japanese literature. After her graduation, Ms. Malhan worked in the publishing and advertising industry in Tokyo as a writer and editor. Moving to New York in 1996, she established a publishing company in 1998. In July 2001, she and Arvind Malhan were married in New Delhi, India. In summer 2002 her book about New York life was published in Japan. Now, Ms. Malhan is planning to translate her first book “Machino-hi” (City Lights) from Japanese into English.

Bio Data Statement: Revisions (page 62)

Wan-Yi Liu was born in Taiwan. Her family includes her father, mother and older brother, who is going to get married in 2006. She and her fiancé will also have a wedding in Taiwan next year. Graduating from Fu-Jen University in 2003, she majored in communication and visual media. She worked in a television program production company in 2004 as the producer of a variety show, which was enjoyable because she met many people and learned a great deal. In 2005, she left her job and came to the United States to improve her English skills and gain cross-cultural experience. She plans to return to Taiwan in 2006 and find a job editing a magazine. (115 words)

Claudia Aguilera was born in Mexico City and attended Anahuac University in Mexico City. She majored in communication and graphic design, graduating in 2001, and wrote a thesis titled “Photography Handbook for Beginners.” She also received a Professional International Cuisine diploma and took a course in Mexican cuisine. In February 2003, she studied photography at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. Between 2003 and 2005, Ms. Aguilera worked as an Account Executive for Ogilvy & Mather in Mexico City, where she developed marketing briefs, made contacts with clients, and was in charge of the production of TV advertisements. (100 words)

Born in Bogota, Colombia, Alex Mendez graduated in 1999 from Javeriana University with a major in journalism, a field to which he is dedicated. During his studies, he was an intern at two Colombian newspapers. Then he wrote for *Cambio*, a

Colombian magazine owned by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. Between 1998 and 2001, he worked with the Mayor of Bogota. In 2002 Mr. Mendez entered Reuters News Agency as a correspondent for Colombia, where he covered politics, culture, and the economy. Currently, his focus is on a variety of Latin American issues. (100 words)

